

CFACSA14

Use customer service as a competitive tool



Overview

This Standard is part of the Customer Service Theme of Impression and Image. This Theme covers the Customer Service behaviours and processes that have most impact on the way your customer sees you and your organisation. Remember that customers include everyone you provide a service to. They may be external to your organisation or they may be internal customers.

Customer service contributes to an organisation's competitive position. Customers of many organisations have choices about the services or products they use and who supplies them. Often the technical features and cost of the service or product are almost identical. If this is the case, the quality of the customer service offered makes all the difference to which supplier the customer chooses. This Standard is about how you can play your part in ensuring that your organisation makes the best possible use of the competitive advantage that can be gained from offering superior customer service. It covers how you use customer service as a tool to compete effectively with other providers of similar services or products. The Standard is not for you if your organisation does not compete actively with others.

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Performance criteria

Organise customer service to gain a competitive advantage

You must be able to:

- P1 develop your own and colleagues' understanding of the services or products offered by your organisation
- P2 define your organisation's service offer and the ways in which it compares with those of your competitors
- P3 set an example for colleagues and present an image to your customers that reinforces your organisation's service offer
- P4 encourage customer service actions that create and develop customer loyalty

Deliver a competitive service

You must be able to:

- P5 take positive actions and encourage colleagues to take actions that provide individual customers with added value within your organisation's service offer
- P6 remind your customers about your service offer and the extra benefit it provides over those of your competitors
- P7 offer additional technical advice to customers within your organisation's service offer
- P8 show awareness of the financial implications of any added value actions that you or your colleagues might offer
- P9 meet customer service targets to ensure that your customers see the benefit of dealing with you rather than with a competitor
- P10 re-direct customers to other service providers without causing offence when their expectations cannot be met by your organisation's service offer
- P11 ensure that customers who have shown a previous interest in repeat and additional services are reminded of this
- P12 encourage colleagues to offer complementary services or products when customer satisfaction indicates that your customers would be interested in them

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 the factors that lead to customers' belief that they are enjoying value for money
- K2 how to research and compare services or products, including using the internet and social media sources
- K3 the services or products offered by your organisation
- K4 the services or products offered by competitors
- K5 features and benefits of services or products that are seen by customers as added value
- K6 the purpose of adding non-chargeable items to the service offer in order to impress customers and develop customer loyalty
- K7 how to portray a positive image that reinforces your organisation's competitive position
- K8 your organisation's customer service targets and cost implications of added value actions to improve the organisation's competitive position
- K9 complementary services or products that may be of interest to your customers

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